

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the amendments and remarks made herein.

As a preliminary matter, Applicant notes that the claim of foreign priority has not been acknowledged in the Office Action. A formal acknowledgement of Applicant's foreign priority in the next communication would be appreciated.

Without acceding to the outstanding rejections, Claims 1-15 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 16-22 have been added, with Claims 16 and 20 being independent.

Independent Claim 16 recites a telescopic shaft for vehicle steering which is installed in a steering shaft of a vehicle and in which a male shaft and a female shaft are fitted to each other to be capable of transmitting torque therebetween and moving in an axial direction. At least one first pair of axially extending grooves is formed respectively on an outer peripheral surface of the male shaft and an inner peripheral surface of the female shaft so as to face each other with at least one spherical body, radially biased by a spring, interposed therebetween. For at least one said first pair of grooves, a corresponding projection is formed on the outer peripheral surface of said

male shaft so as to be axially juxtaposed to the corresponding groove formed on the outer peripheral surface of said male shaft and so as to be fitted, through a gap, in the corresponding groove formed on the inner peripheral surface of said female shaft.

Claim 20 also recites a telescopic shaft for vehicle steering which is installed in a steering shaft of a vehicle and in which a male shaft and a female shaft are fitted to each other to be capable of transmitting torque therebetween and moving in an axial direction. As set forth in Claim 20, at least one first pair of axially extending grooves is formed respectively on an outer peripheral surface of said male shaft and an inner peripheral surface of said female shaft so as to face each other with at least one torque transmitting member interposed therebetween. Said one torque transmitting member, for at least one said first pair of grooves, is a spherical body biased radially by a spring. For at least one said first pair of grooves, a corresponding projection is formed on the outer peripheral surface of said male shaft so as to be axially juxtaposed to the corresponding groove formed on the outer peripheral surface of said male shaft and so as to be fitted, through a gap, in the corresponding groove formed on the inner peripheral surface of said female shaft.

The Castellon and Duval et al. patents applied in the rejections of the previous Office Action fail to teach or reasonably suggest the aforementioned features of Claims 16 and 20.

For example, Castellon fails to teach or suggest at least one spherical body biased radially by a spring and interposed between the grooves of the male and female shafts. Castellon merely teaches cylindrical rods in the grooves.

Additionally, Duval et al. fail to teach or suggest a projection formed on the male shaft so as to be axially juxtaposed to one of a pair of grooves with a spherical body or a torque transmitting member interposed therebetween. Instead, Duval et al. teach projections that are circumferentially spaced from the grooves with interposed spherical bodies.

Accordingly, Claims 16-22 patentably distinguish from the prior art of record.

An early Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (XA-10323) any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any

extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /Mitchell W. Shapiro/
Mitchell W. Shapiro
Reg. No. 31,568

Miles & Stockbridge P.C.
1751 Pinnacle Drive
Suite 500
McLean, Virginia 22102
(703) 903-9000

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